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Abraham Lincoln.

The immortal President Discussed as "the Greatest of American Workingmen"—His Greatness Gained in the Academy of Actual Labor—In Working With His Own Hands He "Learned the Freemasonry of Human Feeling."—As President He Struck Down the Conspiracy Against American Labor as Carried on Under Guise of Free-Trade and Slavery by the Democratic Party—How the Republican Party Has Made American Labor the Best Paid in the World—Now It Will Foster and Encourage Profit-Sharing, Co-Operation, and Industrial Capitalization—Thus Helping to Gain Larger Profits and New Dignities to all American Labor—"Take the Post-Office Out of National Politics and Put It in Neighborhood Politics"—Lincoln the Great Workingman.



r. J. S. Clarkson, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, was invited to address the Republican State League of Ohio, at Columbus, on the 12th inst., the birthday of Abraham Lincoln. Mr. Clarkson had prepared something in which he dealt with Mr. Lincoln from a new standpoint, but was prevented by illness from going to the banquet. Below is what he intended to say on the question of Lincoln as a workingman :

It has always seemed to me that the State of Ohio is the most favorable ground in America for liberal speech. It is the typical American State. It is of the North, and yet near the South. It is neither East nor West. The representative American, to-day nearest the typical American of the future, is the citizen of Ohio. Here, on this middle ground, where the four great subdivisions of the Republic meet, is good counsel ground for American thought and discussion. Here is neither Eastern narrowness nor Western prejudice. Here is best represented in feeling the future relations between the North and the South. In schools, in business achievements, in social life, in all the larger tokens of civilization, in loyalty to the Union, in liberality to all people, in courage of opinion, and courage of action, the State of Ohio and its people are always willing to hear any good cause, and to give intelligent judgment upon any proposition for the good of the Republic.

A Man of the People.

Speaking to the gallant Republicans of Ohio on the birthday of Abraham Lincoln, I would not talk of him as the great ruler whose serene and lofty fame has become a cherished possession of that wider world which now runs wherever human liberty is known. Instead, I would speak of him as the greatest of American workingmen. I would turn to the seamy side of his life, to his boyhood, when working with his own hands, he learned in poverty that free-masonry of human feeling which is never otherwise acquired. I would turn to the days when, face to face with want and hardship, his own heart touched the cross of human suffering, never after to lose its sympathy with sorrow nor to cease its opposition to wrong. Lincoln, when he often tired of the advice of Cabinet and Congress and of the counsel of all the famous and the wise, always sought refuge and instruction in the sympathy and friendship of those whom he called "the plain people." He had the larger vision, and was lifted up above mere statesmanship or experienced human knowledge. He could turn from power, from wealth, from the precedents of time and the axioms of the ages in Government, and go among the plain people, and find there the wisdom to save the Republic, to free a race from slavery, and to give new meaning to human liberty.

The Party of the People.

Leaders of public thought and students of public affairs in this new generation, which does not know Abraham Lincoln as the generation of the war time knew him, may find illumination for many dark places now in going nearer to the plain people. All the power the Republican party has ever gained, all the renown it has ever won in service to the Republic and the cause of universal freedom, it sought and found in the wisdom of the millions who, like Lincoln, learned the sufficient knowledge through their own suffering and trials. It is well enough to recall on this birthday of the great commoner, of this greatest of American workingmen, that in his Americanism he knew nothing of aristocracy, and in his Republicanism nothing but human sympathy. The Republican party was born without an aristocracy. The Republican party is plebian, not patrician. The Republican party to-day is typified in the mechanic or the farmer, as the Republican party during the war was the Union soldier. The average American of this time, as then, is not the professional man, nor the banker, nor the rich man. If an artist were commissioned to make a statue of the typical American in this century he would make it a Republican workingman. Therefore the Republican party is a party of the people. It is the people. Wherever it has kept near its own heart, which has always been the heart of labor, it has been invincible. When it has strayed from it it has lost.

Democratic Conspiracy against Labor.

What is the lesson of Lincoln's life and the suggestion of Lincoln's birthday? It is to take the Republican party nearer than ever to the people. I say frankly that the greatest work and most solemn duty resting upon the Republican party is first and always to address itself to meeting any danger menacing or any real grievance existing among the people, the laborers of the farm and the shop. The greatness of Lincoln's career was in resisting and defeating the culmination of the first great con-

spiracy against American labor, for free-trade in the United States has never been anything else but a plot against the American workingman. Slavery as it existed in this Republic was not simply a conspiracy against the negro because he was black; it was because he was a workingman. The South wanted slavery, not to enslave the negro, but to get his labor as nearly for nothing as possible, and to protect the ruling white class from being compelled to labor themselves. The struggle in this country has always been, in the South for cheap labor, in the North for free and well-paid labor. McDuffie, of South Carolina, the greatest of all American free-traders, past or present, who wielded the power of his party in Congress from 1822 to 1853, in assailing protection always did so on the bold public ground of protesting against "compelling the South with slave labor costing twenty-five cents a day to compete with free labor in the North at a dollar a day." He and all Southern white leaders then boldly said that labor was the work of a slave alone, and for fifty years the Democratic party in the United States attempted to make all labor either slave labor or else paid in slave's wages. McDuffie in speeches in Congress always said that Northern white labor would in the end be coerced to the same wages and the same condition as the Southern black slaves. For fifty years this was the purpose of the Democratic party; and McDuffie in his message as Governor of South Carolina in 1835 declared the labor element, "bleached or unbleached, the dangerous element in the body politic." The result of fifty years of Democratic effort for free-trade was the appeal of the South to rebellion—the last resort to retain slave labor. President Lincoln, who had watched the development of the Southern purpose, clearly understood it all, and in his inaugural message of 1861 characterized "the rebellion as the result of an effort to place capital above labor in the structure of the government." The North, true to human liberty and to free labor, rallied to his defense, and the first conspiracy against the workingmen of America failed signally before the eyes of the world, stricken down by the faithful hand of a workingman occupying the highest office in the land.

Republican Protection to Labor and Capital.

Not only this. Lincoln and the Republican party in their humanity stooped down and took the three millions of slaves held by the South and in the cruelty of free-trade, and made them citizens and free laborers, adding their enormous labor to the competition of its own free labor, which, so far from opposing the action, demanded and welcomed it. The capital of the North, which had opposed the free-trade conspiracy against labor, also supported Lincoln, and has, in the main, ever since, very largely stood in its defence. For the American policy of protection is, when it is all told, maintained for the purpose of perpetuating the difference between the wages of Europe and America. Measure it as you may, there is the whole fact. Protection is no longer for capital. It is wholly for labor.

Thus, the Republican party, while protecting labor, also protected and promoted capital in the interest of labor and the interest of the country. The party early proved its business thrift, as well as its humanity. Early in its life, beginning in '61, it displayed such supreme business ability, and gave to the American people such rule and legislation as enabled this generation of Americans to make and amass more

money than any people in the world at any time in history have ever been able to gain. Fortunes were never made so rapidly. The condition of labor was never improved so quickly. It is estimated now by reliable and skilled authorities that in the thirty-two years since 1860 thirty-eight billions in value has been added to the wealth of the United States under Republican policies. The South alone, which was destroyed at the end of the war as completely as men and armies can destroy a country, has itself gained and now possesses more wealth than the entire nation possessed at the beginning of the war.

Give Capital Its Just Due.

It is to be said, too, that the mass of American capital in this last thirty years has been sympathetic and patriotic. It furnished the five billions of dollars necessary to subdue the Democratic rebellion and save the Union. It furnished the money to develop the country. When two hundred million dollars were needed to run one carload of commerce from San Francisco to New York, largely through a wild and unsettled country, capital cheerfully furnished it. When thousands of millions more were required to make the commerce between the North and the South, East and West, quick and certain and cheap, capital quickly furnished that. Wherever railroads thus built made their way, the land was touched into a value in gold, the homesteader's farm and all. This increment of wealth amounted to staggering totals, and it was divided among the millions of the farms and the towns. The same energy and patriotic faith shown by capital in these days were also shown in the establishment of thousands of new factories and enterprises for the larger employment of labor, for creating insurance, banking, telegraph, and all sorts of corporations, until thousands of millions of more money were put into human activities, labor sharing in it all. The capital and the labor of no country have ever fostered and developed a land as patriotically and as rapidly as American labor and American capital have developed this country in the past generation.

Grand Work of the Republican Party.

Thus, in this short space of time, a mere breath in the life of a nation, the policies and the courage of the Republican party first saved American labor from the conspiracy of free-trade to degrade it to slave labor, and next it set up in the new hemisphere a republic of workingmen the best-paid in the world. But it can not and will not stop with this, nor will the patriotism of American capital remain satisfied merely with its past. For as much as the Republican party and American capital have done for labor, they will yet do far more. We are near the time when the American Republic, still most faithful of all governments to labor, will rapidly enter upon the revised conditions in the line of co-operation, profit-sharing, and industrial capitalization, which shall give to labor still larger rewards. Already the United States has a larger number of profit-sharing establishments than either France or England, and they will multiply rapidly. The American Republic, the land of protection and defense of labor, must lead in these great departures. Capital itself is beginning to see that it is doing well enough when it makes six or eight or ten per cent., and then above that divides the additional profit with labor. It is not only

American labor's logical right and good fortune under our peculiar system, but every experiment which has been tried has shown that it profits capital as much as labor.

It gives to the laborer the dignity of partnership. It makes his work still more a pleasure and a matter of pride. It puts all work, even in the largest establishment, under the eye and hand of a partner. It gives higher reputation, wider market, and a velvet of additional profit to goods and wares so made. The Republican party is sure to encourage capital to take its way to kindly results, and no one can now describe the immeasurable benefits which in this new order will result to the good of labor and the good of the country.

Solution of the Labor Problem.

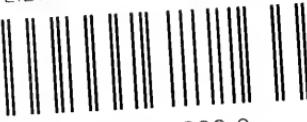
For my part, I believe that profit-sharing is the coming solution of the labor problem and of the conflicts between labor and capital. The railways in the land may yet find their refuge in this, from their present doubtful existence under the experiment of being private property under public control. They can look to that, or finally to government ownership, operated under an enlisted service, as well as government control. The immense private enterprises of cities, the large dry goods houses, as well as factories, are not only ready to follow, but some are already leading the way. The great houses of Clafin, and of Thurber, Whyland & Co., of New York, the great Pillsbury Mills, of Minnesota, and other large American establishments, have all found in trying this new departure that it is better for themselves as well as better for labor. While capital is trying profit-sharing, let labor and capital together try co-operation. The Republican party can devise the methods and clear the way, in the large wisdom and in the devotion to labor and the interest of the country that it has always shown. I do not doubt that in a few years we shall see nearly all the larger establishments in America, especially those established and made prosperous under the Republican policy of protection, adopting the plan of profit-sharing and co-operation, thus lifting up American labor still more, to the admiration and envy of the world.

A Word of Warning.

By all those tokens of the past, by all those promises of the future, there are millions of workingmen in the Democratic party who belong in the Republican line. As slavery was maintained by the South to insure cheap labor, so are the millions of black men in the South menaced and degraded to-day for the same purpose. The plot of the Southern States against the negro race is the same old Democratic plot against free labor. The greatest menace to the well-paid labor of the North to-day is the settled attempt of the South to degrade black labor into a peasantry and into wages of twenty-five or fifty cents a day. No intelligent laboring man, North or South, should be blind to these facts. The Democratic party has always adulated capital and been domineered by wealth. It protected property when it was invested in human beings as slaves. The changes among rich men in New England now is money going back to the Democratic party. Harvard College goes back to its old love of the money class. All arrogance of wealth is generally displayed against the Republican party. Mugwumpery itself is simply one of the eruptions of congested wealth



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